

**Draft Summary of the Environmental Work Group Meeting  
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)  
July 24, 2002**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted a meeting for the Environmental Work Group on July 24, 2002 in Oroville.

A summary of the discussion, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present a summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following are attachments to this summary:

Attachment 1	Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2	Meeting Attendees
Attachment 3	Flip Chart Notes
Attachment 4	List of Project Studies – cumulative elements
Attachment 5	SP-F16: Evaluation of Project Effects on Instream Flows and Fish Habitat – Draft Phase 1 Report
Attachment 6	SP-F5/7: Evaluation of Fisheries Management on Project Fisheries
Attachment 7	SP-F15: Evaluation of the Feasibility to Provide Passage for Targeted Species of Migratory and Anadromous Fish Past Oroville Facility Dams
Attachment 8	SP-F21: Project Effects on Predation of Feather River Juvenile Anadromous Salmonids

### **Introduction**

Attendees were welcomed to the Environmental Work Group meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliations. The desired outcomes of the meeting were discussed as listed on the meeting agenda. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. Meeting flip chart notes are included as Attachment 3.

### **Action Items – June 26, 2002 Environmental Work Group Meeting**

A summary of the June 26, 2002 Environmental Work Group meeting is posted on the relicensing web site. The Facilitator reviewed the status of action items from that meeting as follows:

<b>Action Item #E49</b>	Provide comments on Cumulative Impact Approach/ESA guidance document to Steve Ford
<b>Status</b>	Steve Ford with DWR reported that while he is still interested in receiving comments, none have been received to date.
<b>Action Item #E50</b>	Confirm “comfort level” for SP-F8 changes approved by Environmental Work Group with Eric Theiss (NMFS) and Ron Davis.
<b>Status</b>	Steve Ford reported the Ron Davis has approved the revisions and Eric Theiss confirmed National Marine Fisheries Services is also comfortable with the revisions to SP-F8.
<b>Action Item # E51</b>	Provide draft list of cumulative issues at July Environmental Work Group meeting for discussion.
<b>Status</b>	A draft list of study plans with potential cumulative elements will be discussed as Item VI on today's agenda.

<b>Action Item # E52</b>	Consider one-page summary document as an update on study plan implementation to the Environmental Work Group.
<b>Status</b>	Steve Ford reported that an update on study plan implementation would be presented at the August Environmental Work Group meeting.
<b>Action Item #E53</b>	Track SP-F9 in order to ensure that hatchery considerations are evaluated, potentially under SP-F2.
<b>Status</b>	Tracking will take place as SP-F9 is developed to ensure that appropriate information gathering is described and links to SP-F2 identified.

### **Update on Plenary Group Actions**

Steve Ford updated the Environmental Work Group on Plenary Group actions from their July 23, 2002 meeting. The Plenary Group revisited conditionally approved study plans SP-W2, SP-F1, SP-F2, SP-F3.1, and SP-F8. Steve explained that a discussion is still needed regarding some of the changes requested by NMFS and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for SP-W2. SP-W2 remains on the Plenary Group's conditionally approved list pending Environmental Work Group approval. The Plenary Group approved study Plans SP-F1, SP-F2, SP-F3.1, and SP-F8.

The Plenary Group conducted a 'heartburn' review of study plans SP-F5/7, SP-F21 and SP-F15. No heartburn issues were identified and the Plenary Group conditionally approved these study plans pending Environmental Work Group approval.

### **Study Plan Review**

Three study plans were scheduled for review during the July Environmental Work Group meeting: SP-F5/7, SP-F21, and SP-F15.

#### **SP-F5/7**

Eric Theiss with NMFS suggested that the objectives include an evaluation of fisheries management plans by resource agencies. The Environmental Work Group agreed to this as well as several other minor changes to SP-F5/7 and the study plan was approved.

#### **SP-F21**

Mike Meinz of Department of Fish and Game (DFG) requested a reference to Dr. Moyle be included in the study plan introduction. Dave Olson from the consulting team responded that he would check on the correct reference date and add it to the study plan. Mike also confirmed that the Live Oak diversion was included in the study plan. Wayne Dyok with the consulting team explained that PM&E measures would not be evaluated in this study plan and language would be added to clarify this point. With the revisions noted, the Environmental Work Group approved SP-F21.

#### **SP-F15**

Eric Theiss asked if issues such as disease transmission related to fish passage would be incorporated in SP-F15. David Olson responded that such issues are included in 15C. Steve Ford added that 15C was not yet completed and could incorporate other issues considered by the Environmental Work Group as appropriate to address.

A participant questioned if constructing a fish ladder at Oroville Dam was being considered. The study plan includes an evaluation of the feasibility of such a ladder. Eric Theiss thought that it would likely find and document the ladder to be infeasible due to the required length.

Eric Theiss responded to a question regarding his use of the term 'complete barrier' to migration and comparison to other projects where some fish might succeed in passing a barrier that stops

most. He explained that rather than negotiate an absolute number of fish capable of passing a particular point, his interest is in determining where the complete barriers to migration occur upstream of Oroville Reservoir. David Olson explained that a technical input session discussing this study plan had developed a process to evaluate potential barriers that includes preparation of a detailed description and consultation with experts to determine the most likely complete upstream barrier. Eric Theiss also clarified that habitat areas upstream are important and his desire is to look at each site to determine potential for passage.

The Environmental Work Group recommended coordination with SP-F2 be added to SP-F15. Mike Mainz also asked that the PG&E Poe or North Fork Feather River Application be added as a reference to this study plan. Eric Theiss added that he intends to ask PG&E to coordinate with the Environmental Work Group to provide cumulative information. With the revisions noted, the Environmental Work Group approved SP-F15.

### **List of Study Plans with Potential Cumulative Issues**

Steve Ford distributed a list of Environmental Work Group study plans with notations identifying potential cumulative elements. The document is appended to this summary as Attachment 4. He explained that DWR is still developing a proposed approach for cumulative impact analysis that could be consistently applied across all work groups. Once developed, the approach will be discussed at each Work Group for consensus approval.

### **Study Plan SP-F16 Update**

Tom Payne with the consulting team gave a presentation updating the Environmental Work Group on results of SP-F16, Phase 1. Tom distributed copies of the SP-F16 Phase 1 draft report and described the objectives of the first phase. He described the steps taken to evaluate available reports, articles and summary data assembled by DWR to determine what if anything is needed to supplement the information to support the relicensing effort. He identified two areas for additional effort: 1) additional river study sites for supplemental hydrologic data collection and 2) additional biological data collection. Tom explained that once the additional hydrologic and biologic data was collected, it should be added to the existing data and new final habitat suitability criteria created and linked with the hydraulic data to create new flow suitability indices. The draft Phase 1 report is appended to this summary as Attachment 5.

Steve Ford suggested a technical task force further discuss the Phase 1 study results in August. Recommendations of the technical task force could then be brought back to either the next Environmental Work Group or a special Environmental Work Group meeting could be held to expedite approval and early implementation of additional fieldwork for SP-F16. The Environmental Work Group agreed that a technical task force should meet and two dates were identified for meetings to be held at SWRI offices in Sacramento. The dates, times and locations are indicated below.

### **Next Steps / Meetings**

Michael Perrone with DWR announced that he has a few copies of a draft report on downstream migration of salmonids for anyone that is interested. If there are not enough copies for all interested, contact Michael directly to obtain a copy.

The Technical Input Group will meet to discuss SP-F16 on:

Date: Monday, July 29, 2002 and Thursday, August 8, 2002

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Location: SWRI Office, 2031 Howe Avenue, Suite 110, Sacramento

The Environmental Work Group agreed to meet on:

Date: Wednesday, August 21, 2002

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: Oroville Field Division

The Environmental Fisheries Task Force will next meet to discuss SP-F9 on:

Date: Wednesday, August 7, 2002

Time: 9:30 a.m. -3:30 p.m.

Location: Oroville Field Division

AND

Date: Monday, August 12, 2002

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Location: Sacramento (TBD)

### **Action Items**

The following list of action items identified by the Environmental Work Group includes a description of the action, the participant responsible for the action, and due date.

**Action Item #E54:** Report back to Environmental Work Group on resolution of F2-F15 coordination issue

**Responsible:** DWR

**Due Date:** August 21, 2002

**Action Item #55:** Hold technical input meetings to discuss SP-F16 and provide recommendations at August Environmental Work Group meeting to gain consensus approval by end of August.

**Responsible:** DWR/consulting team/technical team

**Due Date:** August 21, 2002